THE UNIVERSALIST Leader

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY FOUNDED BY HOSEA BALLOU IN 1819

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Continuing the CHRISTIAN LEADER and its predecessors (1819 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST and its predecessors (1827 to 1897), the GOSPEL BANNER (1835 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST LEADER (1897 to 1926), and THE CHRISTIAN LEADER (1926 to 1953).

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The bond of fellowship in this church shall be a common purpose to do the will of God as Jesus revealed it and to co-operate in establishing the Kingdom for which he lived and died.
To that end we avow our faith in
God as Eternal and All-conquering Love,
The spiritual leadership of Jesus,
The supreme worth of every human personality,
The authority of truth known or to be known,
And in the power of men of good will and sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil and progressively establish the Kingdom of God.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

December, 1958 — No. 12

Our cover pictures the Universalist Church in Oak Park, Illinois, its facade decorated for the Christmas season with a large illuminated wreath.

Robert M. Rice, minister of the First Universalist Church of Oak Park, Illinois, has, at our request, written the essay, **The Life that Inspired Christmas.** Mr. Rice does not condemn the holiday aspect of Christmas, but he does us the favor of reminding us that Christmas is first a holy day, made forever holy by the life it commemorates.

Henry F. Pommer, in his **Letter from Linesville,** suggests realistic methods by which churches can help their political leaders work effectively for peace.

The **editor,** with the aid of fellow Universalists from Philadelphia, and with the very reluctant consent of Miss Hale, has recorded the story of the **Carrie M. Hale Wing of the Heart Hospital,** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This fine gift is truly Universalism in action.

Elmo A. Robinson, Universalist minister and teacher of philosophy, concludes his philosophic summary, **A Universalist Pilgrimage II,** in this number.

William B. Rice, minister of the Unitarian Society, Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts, and chairman of the Joint Universalist-Unitarian Merger Commission, has an important message for all of us in connection with the study of possible merger now going on in Universalist and Unitarian churches. Mr. Rice points out the central fact upon which we must all proceed when he says, **The Decision Is Yours.**

The Ninth Annual Convention of the Association of Universalist Men, held recently at Attleboro, Massachusetts, was kindly reported for us by Roland Gammon, Past President of the organization.

The Life That Inspired Christmas

Robert M. Rice

AS I look out of my study window during the weeks before Christmas, I can see crowds of people carrying parcels into the post office across the street. At times the traffic presents the confusion of a madhouse. I am sure that the post office clerks and carriers are harassed and weary beyond words. Truly, in this season, there is need for an added amount of good will, patience, and understanding.

The Advent season is a wonderful one. There are those who are very critical of the commercialism involved. Some are even cynical enough to say that the only motivation for all the decorations in the business sections of cities is that of gaining private profit.

To me there is something wonderful about the Christmas decorations, the Christmas music, and even the bustling crowds. I would feel that something were lost if it were omitted. I know that there are many weary persons who work long, hard hours for weeks before Christmas itself comes. Some may be so tired they can hardly enjoy the holiday because of this. We do, indeed, need to be unusually thoughtful of others in this season in order that none become nervously and physically exhausted.

Now having said I love the festivities of this season, I would also say that I agree with those who remind us that we can become so taken up with rushing and overspending that we can forget the deeper meaning behind it all.

The life that inspired Christmas is not that of Santa Claus. No, the life that inspired Christmas is that of Jesus of Nazareth. The more one studies what others have written about Jesus, the more one realizes that Jesus has become the spiritual ideal of multitudes of persons, but students have been more interested in creating the Christ ideal, pouring into it all the hopes and aspirations and the theology that imagination and vision can create, than they have been in finding the historical Jesus.

We find that the term "Christ" is the English equivalent of the Hebrew term for "Messiah." Messiah simply means the anointed one. Into this term, "Messiah," was poured all the hopes of the Hebrew people long before the time that Jesus lived.

In Jesus' day, this prophetic ideal had become firmly fixed in the minds of the Jewish people. Some of Jesus' followers felt that he was this long-looked-for Messiah. In the New Testament, the Greek term "Christos" was used in place of the Hebrew term "Messiah." The two terms are synonymous, or were in the Apostolic Age.

Since that time, the term Christ has been interpreted by many persons in various ways. In the Gospel of John, the Christ ideal became the incarnate word of God taking on the bodily form of Jesus. In the fourth century, it became the second member of the trinity. For the Roman Church, Christ became the founder of the infallible church.

For the military-minded, Jesus has often been used as the example of a man infuriated by injustice and dishonesty and ready to fight the powers that be, as he chased the money changers from the temple. For the pacifist, he is the one who said, "Resist not evil."

Jesus has been pictured as the sad Galilean. On the other hand, I recall so well the popular book published a quarter of a century ago or more, *The Man Nobody Knows,* by Bruce Barton. This pictures Jesus as the modern hail-fellow-well-met type of man; a super-salesman, and a publicity-minded kind of individual. I think Jesus was neither the sad Galilean nor do I think he was a twentieth century go-getter. Children loved him, according to the scriptural record, and we are told he was a popular

guest at parties. He was criticized by some because he had good fellowship with some people of the type which more pious folks held in disdain.

On the other hand, Jesus was not a great organizer. He founded no church, but merely gathered about him a few men who shared his problems and his faith. He was born a Jew. He died a Jew. He was never excommunicated from the Jewish religion and he never resigned from it.

Much of his inspiration came from the Hebrew prophets. As a boy, he probably looked forward to the celebration of Chanukah as eagerly as our boys and girls look forward to Christmas.

In the year 168 B.C., King Antiochus ordered the Jews to worship an idol which he set up in the temple in Jerusalem. The Jews revolted and finally drove the Syrians out and rededicated the Temple. They burned a cruse of oil that burned for eight days. Today, the Jewish people memorialize those eight days by lighting candles successively, a day at a time until eight candles have been lighted.

Chanukah comes in December and is historical and deeply spiritual. It is a time of rejoicing, and as we give gifts at Christmas, so the Jewish people give gifts at Chanukah. They enjoy feasting and merrymaking but there is also the deeper significance of the season. As we sing our Christmas carols, so they sing their Chanukah hymn.

"Yours the message cheering
That the time is nearing
Which will see
All men free
Tyrants disappearing."

As we repeat the angels' song, "Peace on earth, good will toward men," so the Jewish people reiterate and emphasize the message of Zechariah, "Not by might, not by power, but by my spirit, said the Lord." As they celebrate this victory for religious freedom, they emphasize the thought that the ultimate victory of religion shall come not by the power of warfare but by the spirit of God being expressed by men.

Jesus grew up in this tradition. He took it to heart and lived it every day. As life was ebbing from his body as he hung on the cross, he uttered his final prayer for those who were killing him, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." This may seem a far cry from the beautiful stories of Christmas, but is it really? Does not that prayer express the spirit of good will raised to the nth degree?

When we give a different interpretation to the meaning of the cross than do some churches, we do not belittle the sacrifice of Jesus. We simply feel that this was not foreordained by God as a magical means of saving men from endless torture. No, it was a natural process in which a great prophet was so far ahead of his time that for him to remain true to his convictions, he had to accept the role of a martyr.

Let us now return to the life of Jesus in relation to the Christmas festival which celebrates his birth. We should take time to think deeply in order to recognize that our spirit of good will ought to extend beyond those we know. There is much human suffering in the world these days. There are millions of persons who are born, live, and die with never sufficient food to feed them. In every great city, if not in every village, there are folks harassed by want and a sense of futility. There are old people who have lived frugally all their lives and have come to old age with no one who cares, and no one to take care of them. There are children who are ragged, and cold, and hungry, and unloved.

Our thoughts at Christmas time should wander away from the glitter of the season long enough for us to consider the plight of these people. In some way, we can do something to make life a bit more comfortable or cheerful or secure for someone whom we shall never know. The life and character of Jesus should remind us of human needs throughout the year. We can support institutions which serve all the year.

One of the best known parables of Jesus is that of the Good Samaritan. This is not simply the story of one man helping another. Jesus had a very good reason for choosing a Samaritan as the hero of this story. A Samaritan was a foreigner and there were ill feelings between the Samaritans and the Jewish people. In Jesus' day, there was quite a general feeling that the neighbor in the commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself" was to be interpreted as a fellow Israelite. That was a day of tribal ethics. Persons felt they had obligations to members of their own race and state which they did not have to persons of other races and states. We have not fully outgrown that, as we discover, by reading, the happenings in various places in our nation today. In this parable, Jesus was pointing out that there are good persons in every race and in every nation. He was trying to lift the sights of Jewish people that they might outgrow their provincialism

in their dealings with people from outside the border of their land.

The basic philosophy of Jesus was that God has a purpose in his creation and that man is God's partner on earth to carry out that purpose. That purpose is *that all men shall find that abundant life* which is the fulfillment of all their potentialities of worth. Jesus felt that righteousness is an inner motivation to do that which is of significance, not because there is a law which states we must, but because we ourselves have grown in spirit so that we want to do these things for their own worth.

Let us enjoy the beauty of this season, but let us think of the deeper meanings which Christmas should have for us. When the decorations have been taken down and the gaiety is over, something of the Christmas spirit should linger with us. There are hungry and cold and lonesome people in January as well as in December. There is need of the application of The Golden Rule in the summer heat as well as in the winter cold. If peace on earth is ever to come, it will come because men hear the angelic song within their hearts and become men of good will the whole year through.

Santa Claus' suit can be put away in mothballs to await another Christmas season, but the life and example of Jesus should be kept out before us to be regarded and followed every day of the year.

Letter from Linesville

Henry F. Pommer

OUR local congressman was recently quoted in the newspaper as saying, "I have no misgivings about our ability to win a hot war with Russia." This reminds me of the occasions when politicians have had no misgivings about their own elections, only to wake up defeated. Except, of course, that after a modern war few of us would wake up to learn whether anyone had been right.

An equally serious matter is what the congressman thinks victory in a hot war with Russia would be like. How many American and Russian cities would have been completely destroyed? How many millions of people would have been killed, and how many millions maimed? How deadly would the atmosphere have been made by radiation from nuclear bombs? How much civilization would be left for the crippled victor to enjoy?

The congressman's failure to deal with these questions may have sprung from lack of time. Or it may have sprung from failure to grasp what highly placed military and civilian officials have been saying for the past ten years about the new nature of war. I admit that I am, myself, unable fully to grasp the revolution in warfare through which we are living. Many of us realize, however, that even to win a nuclear war with Russia would probably be worse than to suffer any defeat recorded in history.

Persons who are cocksure as to who would win a future war, and who have not added up the prices of defeat and victory, are dangerous to us and to themselves. They may recklessly expose their country to the risk of war, and may be sluggish about pursuing those actions which might lead to peace. They discourage that full and objective analysis of our situation with which planning must begin. When quoted abroad, they weaken our allies' confidence in our judgment, and cause increased fear and resentment among our opponents.

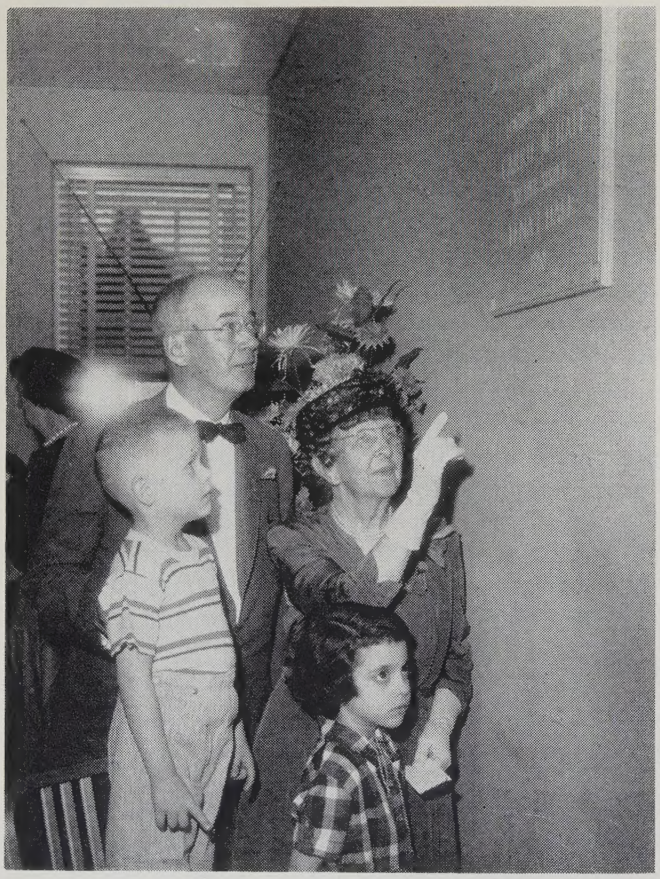
But congressmen are not the only people guilty of overconfidence and oversimplifications; all of us are. Here the Church can be helpful. One of its best techniques is to invite the local Representative to an informal and unpublicized gathering at which one key issue is discussed in as non-partisan and thoughtful a way as possible. The meeting should be directed towards a leisurely exchange of information and perplexities, a fuller understanding of one another and of the issue at hand. Thoughts of votes and pressures should be put aside in favor of joint exploration. To create the best atmosphere, the group should be kept small — if necessary, by involving only a committee from the congregation.

Some religious groups have already extended such invitations, and have had them accepted. The results completely justify a spread of the technique.

Carrie M. Hale Wing Children's Heart Hospital Donated By Lena L. Hale

Miss Lena L. Hale, widely known benefactor of Universalist causes, recently donated a two-story wing to the Children's Heart Hospital of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This much-needed addition will be known as The Carrie M. Hale Memorial Wing, memorializing the late Carrie M. Hale, sister of the donor. The wing will have five rooms on each of its floors.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the benefit of bed patients took place Tuesday afternoon, October 14.



Board President Anderson, Miss Hale and her young assistants examine the memorial plaque.

Miss Hale cuts the ribbon, assisted by two young patients. James Anderson, Board President, and Honorary chairman, Mrs. Edward Shmidheiser, look on.

The ceremony was carried out by Miss Hale, assisted by two of the walking patients of the Hospital. Following the ribbon-cutting, James M. Anderson, president of the Hospital Board, presided at a program for the friends of the Hospital in the recreation room. Dr. George D. Geckeler, cardiologist at Hahnemann Medical College, gave an address. A group of the young patients, well enough to be out of bed, concluded the dedication ceremonies by singing *God Bless This House* and one of their number thanked Miss Hale for her generosity.

Miss Hale, always generous in her support of her local church, was the donor of the Education Building of the Church of the Restoration, Philadelphia, 1954. The following year, her generosity made possible the beautiful Hale Chapel in Atwood Hall, the new building of the Theological School of St. Lawrence University.

A Universalist Pilgrimage II

Elmo A. Robinson

Ethics

LIFE confronts us with the necessity of making choices. That we choose is necessary; what we choose is sometimes indeterminate. In making decisions, one needs general principles for guidance.

For me, the study of philosophy has modified the central ethical question from the traditional Christian, "What does God demand of me?" to the traditional Greek, "What is the good life for creatures like you and me?" All members of the human race share certain universal needs and qualities. From Plato, I take the idea that life's values are diverse, that some values take precedence over others, and that the good life consists in a proper hierarchy and balance of these values. I am sufficiently a materialist to follow Aristotle in affirming that certain external goods are indispensable; here I would include a fair degree of health, access to known medical and surgical aids, access to foods that nourish the body, and shelter to shield it from the stormy blast. These I regard as biological prerequisites to, although not guarantees of, the good life.

Hedonistic ethics, whether as a search for private pleasure with the Epicurean or for universalized pleasure with the utilitarian, is not to be despised. The ability to be satisfied with the simple pleasures of Epicurus and the ability to strive unselfishly by the side of Stuart Mill for the happiness of mankind, are no mean achievements. But to live solely by the ethics of pleasure easily lends itself to a falsification of life.

Stoic ethics are far more realistic. In this year of 1958, with its guilty memories of world wars and its fascinated suicidal dread of another, we would do well to turn back to the Emperor or to the Slave, steeling ourselves against the irrational, the cruel, the tragic. One who has not woven the threads of Stoicism into his garment is today ill-prepared for living.

More than any other philosopher, Kant has influenced my ethical views. His insistence upon the moral law as a fact of experience, his distinction between morality and prudence, his identification of the moral in ourselves as that which we would approve in all others, all seem sound to me. And yet Kant, by limiting the categorical imperative to a single command, obscured the complexity of ethical problems. Most choices, which confront the mature individual, are not clear-cut options between good and evil. They are more likely to be options between two courses, both of which are good or both of which are evil. I believe that there are several moral laws and that moral problems are often difficult because they require that we harmonize our conduct with more than one law for each new specific situation.

It is obvious that for some people olives, oysters, and onions have value, whereas for others they do not. Nevertheless, there are some values which are universal. They are goods or bads for any man of any culture. Sometimes these goods or bads may be hidden, invisible; that is, individual men or mankind in general may not recognize them for what they are. These false judgments do not alter the fact that some things are universally good or bad. What these are specifically has been glimpsed by the great religious teachers.

I shall offer two examples of universal disvalues. No one can look into the face of a beloved child or bosom friend and hope that some day he or she will enter into marriage, committed with fervent faith and consecration to the ideal of a life-long companionship in mutual love, only to have that marriage end in divorce. Divorce is always an evil, a disvalue. Sometimes it may be the lesser of two evils, but the lesser of two evils is never a good.

Other universal disvalues have been called to our attention by the accounts of German concentration camps and of other more ancient inhumanities, from which the humanities are at least an escape and sometimes a protest. One cannot rationally hope that even his worst enemy become a victim of such cruelties or even become an agent in their execution. These are universal disvalues.

Happiness is often mentioned as the positive value which everyone seeks, but *happiness* is an ambiguous word. I define happiness to mean self-realization. Something, call it Freudian Id or call it bodily cells or organs, continually exposes us to the danger of the Leacock hero who rode madly off in all directions. Against such dissipation of the self we must strive by directing our conflicting impulses, instincts, and urges into integrated channels. We must learn to realize ourselves, our whole selves, not merely some

fragment of our selves. Life is an art, with unity and consistency of self-expression as its goal.

Virtue is no guarantee that we will attain happiness in any sense. For happiness is partly dependent upon external factors. Virtue is nevertheless a prerequisite to happiness. Virtue is that which makes us ready for happiness, if external factors permit its arrival. It is easy to let happiness pass us by through failure to make ourselves ready.

To the list of partly external factors, I would add the biological cycle of growth, maturity, marriage, children, grandchildren, old age. A life cut off before the cycle is complete prevents complete self-realization. It is thus not the ideally good life.

Note that this view of self-realization involves us with other people. There is no clear-cut border between persons. I am bound in memory, shared experience, and hope to my parents, my relatives, my wife, my wife's relatives, my children, grandchildren, friends, teachers, colleagues, students. It is nonsense to suppose that my welfare, my happiness, my self-realization can be consummated entirely separately from theirs. To attempt to live selfishly smothers the self.

Complete happiness, complete self-realization is impossible. Internally there is in each a dialectic of impulse. To express one aspect of the self, we must often repress another. Then there are external obstacles in addition to those already suggested. Even the most favored lives cannot escape a knowledge of the world's misery, its poverty, crime, disease, and fear. We, who have pursued the humanities together, ought never entirely to forget man's inhumanities: the cynical cruelties of the Roman empire; the bitter wars of religion; the torturing of prisoners and the crimes of kings; the suffering brought by foreign invasions and by domestic shifts from feudalism to factory methods; the world wars of our own century. We cannot reject these ugly stones from the foundation of our philosophy; yet upon them we must rear a tower of beauty and hope.

Some Specific Sources of Happiness

One of the chief sources of my happiness has been *work*. In addition to the ministry and teaching, I have been employed in many jobs. Except for two which overtaxed my physical strength, I have enjoyed them all. There is no job without some drudgery; none with which one does not sometimes get fed up. But the net effect for me has been satisfaction, fun, and refreshment. I would like others to be able to work under conditions which permit similar rewards. I am critical of both labor and professional organizations whose propaganda obscures the satisfactions which come from work. On the other hand, I know that many people have to labor under disgracefully unjust conditions; in their behalf I carried on my former preaching of the social gospel and my former socialist activities. Happiness in one's own work should not dull sensitivity to the injustices under which others may live.

A second source of happiness for me has been friendship. One needs new friends from time to time, but life-long friends tie life together. I have enjoyed friendships with those with whom I have worked from day to day, and friendships with people from different social groups and different interests.

I must say something also about love and sex as sources of happiness. Certainly sex has been the theme of much of the fiction and poetry which we have read together, and where not overt, it has been a subterranean current. I always suspect my qualifications for this topic, feeling that any young person of today knows more about sex than I. What can one in whom the flame burns feebly have to say to you who are in the prime of life?

In my youth there were no discussions of sex and marriage. In my four undergraduate years in a department of biology, there was no study of sex behavior at a level much above that of the amoeba. Subsequently, I read Havelock Ellis, Freud, and many others. There was a brief period between my two marriages during which I tried to have love affairs, or tried not to (I am not sure which), but on either count I was not very successful.

Now as I consider the long history of sex in human affairs and in our animal ancestors and how it has been associated with the emergence of the finest qualities of human character, my attitude towards it becomes one of almost religious awe. I find it difficult to take sex lightly. Although I can laugh at the story of Virgil Snopes and Fonzo, I am myself an unsuccessful teller of shady tales, for sex, although not identical with love, is too intimately associated with love, and love with marriage.

It is absurd to expect perfection in marriage. Any marriage is likely to be a mixture of success and failure. Too many people jump into marriage and out again impulsively. Divorce leaves its permanent mark, even when as painless and as decent as possible. The ideal life I believe to be one of strict monogamy, from the first adolescent kiss to the last feeble fare-

well. "I take thee to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, and thereto I plight thee my troth." Monogamy offers the most promising road to self-realization. But few of us attain this ideal. Most of us have to compromise — striving to come as close to it as possible, without overdoing self-blame for failure.

There are certainly variations in sexual temperament. Some persons are more highly sexed than others. Monogamy may not be morally binding on all. Certainly I do not favor legal punishment for all departures from it. But the other extreme of unthinking and selfish promiscuity is irrational and unacceptable. Promiscuity is evidence of virility in sex, but of impotence in love. Operating as deterrents against it are fear of consequences and ideals of loyalty, together with inner psychic inhibitions. These inhibitions, which it is fashionable in some quarters to condemn and which are admittedly sometimes unwholesome, more normally represent a biological and psychological inheritance which is natural and which is ignored at peril.

Even if there be no code of rules which applies to all, there is a principle of universal applicability. You know it already: treat yourself and others as persons, not as things; as ends, not as means. Never have intimacies with one whom you do not respect with feelings of genuine affection and altruism. Remember that mutuality is the key to love. All love is free love; if it is coerced, it is not love. Never try to buy, trick, or force love. But remember also that all love involves obligation. Sex without obligation is far below the level of the human. If you read on from *Sanctuary* into *Requiem for a Nun* you will recall that Temple Drake confesses that she learned this too late.

The boundary between personal and social ethics is vague. Individual personality can find full development only in a just social order. Hence, we must unite in seeking that form of society which will be most favorable to the attainment of individual welfare. The greatest individual is not the person with no family, no vocation, no state, no loyalty, no religiously held convictions, but rather he who has developed these. To be an individual does not mean to break relationships, but to give them unique form.

I am still enough of a pacifist to hold that a world at peace is the fundamental social objective, and that war-makers, whether at home or abroad, are our chief menace. But pacifism stands not only for peace as a goal; it proclaims peace as a method. Pacifist technique seems no longer the simple matter such as I conceived it in 1914; it requires deep conviction and rigid training. But a philosophy is not to be lightly rejected which has been in part defended by Socrates, Isaiah, Jesus, Confucius, Gandhi, Kagawa, and Einstein. Pacifism means not no-resistance, but non-violent resistance.

I am still something of a socialist. Self-realization for all is impossible as men work only for wages and profits. There is satisfaction only from work which contributes to the welfare of others. Nevertheless, socialism is no longer the cure-all I once thought it. Even when I more fully espoused it, I saw in it a means to a healthier individuality. I resented then, as now, uniform tract houses, uniform clothes, uniform autos, uniform books of the month, uniform colleges, newspapers, and opinions. I want individuality, aesthetic autonomy for all. I resented as too tame the revolt of youth after World War I; it seemed to stand for few skirts, no stockings, and many cigarets. I like better the spirit of Paine, Jefferson, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights. I believe in freedom of speech, press, assemblage, teaching, discussion, petition, thought. I want neither the dictation of the proletariat, nor the dictation of the chamber of commerce. I want to find ways to preserve the ideals of 1776 in the world of 1958.

Once after visiting Mission San Antonio de Padua, near the Hearst estate, I wrote:

> The aqueduct is empty, the turning wheel is done,
> But yonder is a Castle, a-gleaming in the sun.
> And Hearst is in that Castle, while Serra's in the grave,
> And Mission doors are open to any pagan knave.
> Forgotten light of glory adheres to weakened wall;
> Pretentious boast of power permeates the Hall.
> The Mission 'dobe crumbles; the Castle walls are new.
> It's more than fields of poppies that separates the two.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> What law of strange survival frames values so reversed?
> What law of evolution makes Serra yield to Hearst?
> The regnant gods are pagan: Hunger, Anger, Fear.
> The Christian God has waited, year on patient year.
> The aqueducts are empty; the wheels no longer sing. . . .

I wish to be loyal to my state and I wish a similar loyalty in others. But loyalty, like love, must spring freely from within; it cannot be forced. I resent being required to sign a loyalty oath to keep my job. I resent being compelled to sing *The Star Spangled Banner* rather than the *America* I learned as a boy. I welcome opportunity freely to express as a man the ardent patriotism of my youth.

Religion

I consider my religious education fortunate. It promoted gradual growth; there was no abrupt conversion. Although my convictions have slowly changed, I have no memory of having painfully to unlearn what I had been taught in my youth. I have always had the sense of belonging to a happy and cheerful religious group, committed to the ideal of individual freedom in religious belief. The motive of fear was never stressed. Opposition to evolution or to science in general was never heard. There was little emphasis upon miracle, upon the deity of Jesus, or upon the superiority of Christianity over other religions.

I suppose that there are very few of the traditional doctrines of the church which I now accept as factually true. I do not regard the Bible as miraculously different in origin from the Iliad or the Dialogs of Plato. Our knowledge of Jesus is too fragmentary to serve as the sole basis for religion. I am not greatly concerned as to whether I am classed as a Christian or not. If I am, I insist on claiming the best of Catholic tradition, the best of Protestant tradition, and the best of Jewish tradition as mine. For these are the threads of my religious culture. Oriental religions I respect and partially accept, but I doubt if we occidentals really understand them.

Religion to me is not a set of beliefs. Rather is it a warm, enthusiastic response towards whatever seems to be the supreme significance of the universe and our own lives in it. As in science, so in religion, one must begin with postulates which one cannot prove. But there are differences. Science is a faith that the universe is rational; religion, that it is moral. Science looks to the progressive victory of reason; religion, to the progressive victory of the good. Science is a description of details; religion, an attitude towards the whole. Science is a knowledge of what is happening and what may happen; philosophy is the deciding as to what had best be done; religion is the devotion and enthusiasm which gets this accomplished.

My religious faith, when expressed in the language of belief, runs something like this: The same impetus which led to the evolution of the chemical elements, which guides the growth of crystals, which directs the life and division of cells, which leads to the origin of new species, which is expressed in the instincts of bees and ants, which forces men into conforming societies, which acts through privileged genius to lead them out of old ways, which was incarnate in Jeremiah and Jesus and Socrates and Gotama, is a single impetus manifest in many forms. The universe is permeated by a guiding force. God's ordering and creative power are like that of a pilot at the helm. Yet God is not the only power. He is but one member, although a unique member, of the society which is the whole. In most respects, we cannot act without him. Yet, in some respects, he cannot act without us. God is related to each of us in somewhat the same way as we are related to the cells of our bodies.

What of the future? Is there life for us after death? I have no inside information, and, in spite of the fact that my time is running out, I am far less interested in this question than I was in my youth. I certainly do not believe in the Heaven and Hell of Dante and Milton. The conventional arguments for a future life, whether in Plato or the New Testament, are unconvincing. There is no convincing empirical evidence, one way or the other. *But Kant's moral argument gives some warrant for the probability of immortality.* If it should turn out so, then I take it to be a condition of personal immortality for all, one of further growth and education, a period of graduate study, as it were, for which a grade of B in this life is not a prerequisite. Gerald Massey sums it up for me.

> Forgive me, Lord, if wrongly I divine;
> I dare not think Thy pity less than mine. . . .
>
> I think Heaven will not shut forevermore
> Without a knocker left upon the door,
> Lest some belated Wanderer should come,
> Heart-broken, asking just to die at home,
> So that the Father will at last forgive,
> And looking on His face that soul shall live.
>
> I think there will be Watchmen through the night,
> Lest any, afar off, turn them to the light;
> That He who loved us into life must be
> A Father infinitely fatherly,
> And, groping for Him, these shall find their way
> From outer dark, through twilight, into day.
>
> I could not joy for Harvest gathered in,
> If any souls, like tares and twitch of sin,
> Were flung out by the Farmer to the fire,
> Whose smoke of torment, rising high and higher,
> Should fill the universe forevermore,
> While we with glad feet trod the crystal floor.
>
> Dear God, it seems to me that Love must be
> The Missionary of Eternity!
> Must still find work, in worlds beyond the grave,
> So long as there's a single soul to save;
> Must, from the highest heaven, yearn to tell
> Thy message; be the Christ to some dark hell;
> That all divergent lines at last shall meet
> To make the clasping round of Love complete.

God for me is the super-monad, all good but not all powerful. Whatever force sustains and activates

the universe must be at least as good, as intelligent, as loving as the finest examples of men and women. There is one God. God is love. Love never faileth.

But what if I be mistaken? Often religion seems selfish, wishing a God to be aware of worship, demanding an answer to prayer, requiring a mystic union. But religion can rise to greater heights. It can be unselfish, can live on even though there seems to be no God that hears, and man seems drifting alone in an uncharted sea of electronic forces. The man of philosophical faith does not stand before the Sphinx and petulantly demand answers to the riddle of the universe, nor proofs that God exists, nor advance copy on human destiny. He seeks to know all that he can, but he does not make full knowledge a prerequisite to faith and the religious life.

The man of philosophic faith is one who, like the prodigal of the parable, has come to himself and who wishes to share that self with others. He seeks to overcome the quality of inexpressibility which links him to the stone. He flings his song into the air, sends out his prayer into the unknown, does his bit of work in the world, and gives his soul to those who will receive it. He does these things, not in the hope that reward may come, but for the very joy of doing them.

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Gordon B. McKeeman

Said Jesus, "Ask, and it shall be given you." We are curious about our universe, about life, about innumerable things. Children reveal their wonder in their questions: "How high is up?", "Who lighted the stars?", "How do the birds know when to fly South?" In the questions we ask, we reveal our feelings. Our questions can be the right questions, or the wrong ones.

For example, in a moment of desperation someone murmurs, "Why was I born?" Here is the tormented question of a person hemmed in by life, oppressed, downtrodden, regretful for all that has passed. It does not occur to such a questioner that he dwells amid two and a half billion people, none of whom knows the answer to this question. We are all thrust into life. No one chose to come hither.

It is possible, in such a mood, to ask the right question. "I am here. I was born. I have these talents and these shortcomings. I possess these resources, physical, mental and spiritual. *What can I make of this life amid these circumstances?*" Sometimes we have to work with leftovers, much as does a cook on the day before payday. And not every dish concocted under such circumstances is a chef's delight. But even if one were to get an answer to "Why was I born?", he'd still have to go on from there.

Some people ask about longevity. "How can I add years to my life?" Over the centuries much progress has been made in increasing the span of life. We have already reached the point where some people live beyond their feeling useful. A more crucial question is "How can I add life to my years?" We may live longer, but for what? We need to ask the right questions, to find out to our own satisfaction, at least, what values in life are worth struggling to achieve, and which prove empty when we have achieved them.

Others ask, in the face of tragedy, "Why has this happened to me?" Implied in such a question is a whole realm of notions impossible to support. Implicit is the idea that God, the universe or "somebody up there" bears a special grudge against one or another of the human race. We never raise this cry of anguish when the sun rises to herald another day. We do not cry, "Why has this happened to me?" when autumn paints the trees with gold and scarlet. Only when some untoward event comes do we accuse the universe of partiality.

The right question to ask is "This has happened; where do I go from here?"

Part of the anguish we feel in asking questions is that we do not ask the right questions. "Ask (the right questions), and it shall be given you."

LIVING TESTIMONIALS

This is what we are saying this morning — and in each of these first services this fall — Church leaders may meet, study, and plan with sincere devotion. They may outline the finest program. They may teach the most significant basic teaching of high religion — and fail. The most significant item in the life of the Church — any Church — is found in the hearts of individuals who are making an effort to grow out of their petty selves toward the new life of "Living Testimonials" in keeping with the highest aspirations their hearts can find.

In a day such as this, this is a challenge to every Church and to every individual within every Church. We cannot be satisfied with the easy way and have meaning, or even exist. The demand today is for something very realistic, but very hard — new lives — the same individuals with a new spirit — a spirit which will take its share of the burdens of the World and bring reality to the world of our dreams.

— Fenwick L. Leavitt, Jr.

The Decision Is Yours

William B. Rice

EVERY minister and every clerk of all Unitarian and Universalist Churches and Fellowships have been sent a copy of the Joint Merger Committee's *Information Manual* and its accompanying *Study Guide.* Many churches and fellowships have asked for extra copies, some of them ordering as many as fifty sets.

Study Groups have been set up by Adult Groups, Denominational Affairs Committees, and Alliances, and everywhere tremendous interest is being demonstrated in the study of the material which has been prepared by the Joint Merger Committee.

The Committee has tried to make it clear that it has never seen its function as that of "telling" the two denominations what to do about merger. All decisions, from the opinion plebiscites taken in Parishes, to the instructional votes called for at the Biennial in October 1959, and the decisive votes in the legal meetings of the A.U.A. and U.C.A. in May of 1960 are *your decisions,* you who make up the churches and fellowships which send delegates to the denominational meetings.

Individual laymen or ministers, denominational executives, board members, are all free to speak their minds pro and con, we hope after study and careful thought, but they have no more power over the final decisions than you. If ever the two denominations make a truly "grass-roots" decision, this will be it!

As our Manual indicates, there have been votes in the past, and various committees have been ordered to make studies and reports, but *to date, neither body is committed to any specific step.* The time for decision is now, and the decision is all yours.

In Detroit in 1955, the Resolution setting up your Joint Merger Commission was passed. Then in May of 1956, the A.U.A. spelled out more specifically just what it felt were the duties and obligations of the Joint Merger Committee. We have followed our instructions as closely and carefully as possible. We not only have given an outline plan of a possible merger, but we have given possible alternatives. We have also employed the services of a competent research firm which specializes in the study of our type of religious-educational-charitable organization.

We appreciate that no other previous committee was given the money, the opportunity and the time in which to prepare a study of the resources of the two denominations. It has been our privilege to work closely with the staffs of both headquarters, and they and all the constituent and affiliated bodies and officers have been most helpful and co-operative. We believe that we have boiled down, condensed, sifted out, and prepared as concise and clear a summary of the pertinent facts as has ever been assembled. To the best of our knowledge, the facts are a true picture of the situation at the time we went to press.

All of us on the committee are men and women of long acquaintance with denominational affairs, but we have been impressed with the fact that not only did we learn much that was new to us about our sister denomination, we also were able to look at our own denomination from a new and informative point of view. We have hidden nothing, avoided no weaknesses, blown up no strengths. It would be impossible to assemble so much material without making mistakes in judgment, and errors in fact, and had we had unlimited funds and ample time, we could have prepared an immense and interesting document with less chance of error. However, we wanted to prepare a plain, straightforward study for you to read, digest, appraise and use in your parish deliberations. We think that you have what you need.

Now we want your opinion and advice. *First* — Really study the *Manual* with the help of the *Study Guide.* This is too serious a matter to discuss pro or con at a Parish meeting when no one has given sober study of the germane facts beforehand. We suggest at least eight meetings of small groups, so large churches may have a dozen groups working at the same time. Let us know how you are going at the study. Let us have reports on your study sessions. Work at it. The future course of liberal religion will depend upon your informed opinion.

Incidentally, the *Manual* has not only outline histories of the Unitarian and Universalist Churches, but

the *Study Guide* has excellent bibliographies, and it can be that this year, we will see a tremendous increase in the number of truly informed liberals. We believe the material will be a stimulus to increased church membership. Use it with new people as well as the old stand-bys.

Second, call a parish meeting at which the Plebiscite Report form at the back of the *Study Guide* will be used as a guide to the order of business. Tell us just how you feel after you have really studied and appraised the situation. *A simple yes or no vote will not be as helpful to us as a careful outline of exactly how you people think we ought to proceed.* We are depending upon you to conduct a true plebiscite which will guide us in our next step.

After April 15, 1959, when the Plebiscite Reports are in our hands, we will tabulate and analyze them as soon as possible. This will take time, but we hope to return our report on the Plebiscite to all churches and fellowships in June. Our report will contain the recommendations in regard to merger or alternatives which we believe the Plebiscite returns indicate as your considered opinion. You will have until the Biennial Meeting in October 1959 to consider our report, which will be presented to the A.U.A. and the U.C.A. then assembled for action on merger. There will be general and group discussion and then, if necessary, a revision of our report to the voting bodies.

This sounds complicated, but actually we go along step by step, as you direct us.

The voting bodies at the Biennial should be truly representative of both denominations, and they will be if each church and fellowship sends every delegate to which it is entitled. They will tell us what we are to do next, be it merger, no merger, or one of the alternatives. Our work will not be ended. We will have to prepare a final Plebiscite to be taken in the churches before the regular A.U.A. meeting in May of 1960 and what will probably be a simultaneous and separate special meeting of U.C.A. These meetings will be so decisive that this long-hanging question of merger will be settled one way or the other for a generation to come.

The Decision is Yours! We have a grave responsibility which we must handle with sober thought and great deliberation. Feeling and emotion play a great part in the effectiveness of a religious organization, but sound judgment is of the utmost importance. You must decide on the direction we are to take, whether it be as a united group, co-operating groups, or like, but wholly separate groups. Decisions made now will shape the future, and our great concern is that you know the facts before you reach any conclusions. Read, reread, carefully, every word in the *Manual.* Go over the *Study Guide* and refer back to the *Manual.* Go over much of the supporting material which is available at both headquarters. Know your opposite denomination as well as you know your own. (And you may need to inform yourself more fully on your own.) Choose the most capable study leaders in your church or fellowship. The time has passed when we can act on impulse. We must face up to the grave responsibility which is ours, and take the actions which will strengthen the organization through which our churches unite for greater effectiveness. The shape of the future of liberal religion is your decision.

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THE TASK BEFORE US

We can go so far with "getting ahead" in an efficient monolithic military society that we can go *too far.* We would like to remake, reshape, redesign man so that he will fit into a global society.

But God has not made us digits, units, cogs which fit harmoniously into a machine. Paul hit it when he said we are "members of one body." A body is not a machine; but our thought process has not yet grown great enough and daring enough to envisage a world able to live creatively with cooperative diversity.

The task before us is not to build either an impregnable fortress or an irresistible war-machine. All thought which depends on either alternative is anachronistic. The task before us must rise from a premise of faith. Faith that men can live together by some other unifying force than might.

— WILLIAM B. RICE

S. B. BUTLER NAMED PRESIDENT OF UNIVERSALIST MEN AT NINTH ANNUAL CONVENTION, ATTLEBORO, MASS.

Converging on the "Jewelry Capital of the Universe" the week end of October 26, laymen from ten Eastern States took part in the Ninth Annual Convention of the National Association of Universalist Men at the handsome new Murray Universalist Church in Attleboro, Mass. At the business meeting on Saturday afternoon, S. B. Butler, Mystic, Connecticut, was elected NAUM's new president. He succeeds Roland Gammon of New York City, who was named to the national executive committee.

The assembled delegates voted to raise the annual dues to $2.00. They also voted to assist the Murray Grove Association in producing and distributing advertising material as well as to continue *The NAUM Newssheet* Special Fund drive and the "Each One, Reach One" membership campaign. The Association now numbers twelve hundred laymen on its active lists.

The featured speaker at the Saturday night banquet was Judge Fred B. Perkins of Providence, often introduced as the "leading Protestant layman of Rhode Island." Judge Perkins, who spoke on the subject, *What Is Happening in the Universalist Church Today,* pointed out that "the essentials of the Universalist faith are two in number; faith in God, and the spiritual leadership of Jesus."

Judge Perkins said, "Faith in God as eternal and all-conquering love appears in the most recent profession of faith. The cornerstone of historic Universalism was the conviction that a God who *could* save all persons and would not, could not constitute a Being worthy of worship. As Hosea Ballou stated it, Universalists believed in a God who *'could* and *would* bring about good.' They believe in the 'benevolent and perfect sovereignty of Almighty God' who, if almighty, and if benevolent, would be bound ultimately to save all peoples." He called attention to the fact that any assertion that this conviction is no longer of importance because now generally accepted is without basis. He cited radio programs listened to by millions of people which took the completely opposite point of view and called attention to the 500,000,000 Roman Catholics who likewise took the opposite view.

He stated that the second basic characteristic of Universalism is that it constitutes a liberal Protestant Christian Church, indicated in the Avowal of Faith by the acceptance of "the spiritual leadership of Jesus." With complete freedom on the part of any person to form for himself his own opinion as to the meaning of the teachings of Jesus, he stated that this was a strategic position for ecumenical Christianity and decried any abandonment of that position merely because, at the moment, others were unwilling to accept it.

Roland Gammon, NAUM retiring president, passes gavel to new president, S. B. Butler of Mystic, Connecticut, at ninth annual laymen's convention, Murray Universalist Church, Attleboro, Mass.

In the light of this basic meaning of historic Universalism, he raised the question as to what the effect would ultimately be in striking from the fundamental documents of The Universalist Church of America such as the Charter, the By-Laws and Laws of Fellowship, all references to Christianity, the Christian Church and Jesus. He pointed out the vast difference between "Universalism" and "a universal religion."

In addition to Mr. Butler, President, other new officers named at the Convention are Judge Perkins, Vice-President, and Guy Briggs of Washington D. C., Secretary. Officers re-elected include the Rev. Harry K. Means, Treasurer; Lloyd E. Morrison, Historian; Cyrus F. Springall, Program Chairman; Levon Seron, Membership Chairman; Harold S. Latham, Publications; Orren B. Alvord, Ministerial and Hartford Beaumont, Publicity.

The Sunday morning worship service was conducted entirely by laymen. Harold Perham of West Paris, Maine, retiring national secretary, preached the sermon. Other parts of the service were carried out by Andrew Weakley of Philadelphia, S. B. Butler of Mystic, Connecticut, Norman Welch of East Orange, N. J., Roland Gammon of New York and Dr. Alfred D. Hanson, chairman of the Attleboro committee.

PLUMB LINE

THE patience of Job, we say; but was Job patient? Read about him again. He curses the day he was born, he wishes he were dead; he questions, even challenges God. "Why did this happen to me? I have lived a good life. What on earth is going on?" Job is a very impatient man. He is so very impatient that we realize that, under this, there must be a fundamental patience, or his impatience would burn itself out. One must be very patient to be so everlastingly impatient as Job was. There must be a basic acceptance, a fundamental faith, to sustain a continuing discontent. We, in our day, complain of bad roads, poor schools, long commercials on television; we complain continually. And entirely foreign to us is the "awful patience" of some who live in much poorer conditions, without even the means through governmental structure of bettering them. But, they are "patient" because they do not have the confident hope which excites impatience.

We complain because basically we are satisfied with our condition and confident it can be made to yield a better living. Job did have patience: a fundamental, immovable faith; so that, with all his complaining, in the depths of his trouble, he still could not bring himself to "curse God and die." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." How can it be otherwise? "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?" Job had a core faith, a basic acceptance. But, it was by no means a dull-eyed fatalism; a bowing down under whatever comes. Immediately on the heels of his great avowal of faith, he said, "But, I will maintain mine own ways before him."

He believed in God, but he did not relinquish his right to question him. Job could not understand all of God's ways, but God made him a man, equipped with hopes, abilities, ideals, a sense of right and wrong and Job insisted there must be a validity in these. He must be true to himself, to what he knows and wants and hopes. He must question, he must use his understanding; he must do what seems good to him. Job will argue his case in the highest court, and he will be justified. God may puzzle him, try him, bewilder him, but God will not destroy, but will justify him. This is the greatest wisdom; to be patient, but creatively patient; to be impatient, but confidently impatient; to be so content with the will of God that we are discontented until it is brought about; to believe in God so deeply that we believe in ourselves.

— CRITERIUS

For Ages 9, 10, 11 . . .

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The Satellite and the Star

THERE is a contrived satellite of the commercial world that calls itself Christmas. It whirls in orbit about the amazed, astonished, and confused buyer's head. So rapid is this orbit and so repetitious that the satellite gives a false sense of permanent brilliance. Built into this thing are all the old and once hearty and real good wishes of man for his fellow man, and this adds mightily to the confusion. The whole performance, however, fades out with terrifying speed leaving its victims in the deep darkness of debt and doubt and dreadful disillusionment. This, of course, is not Christmas, but, alas, is too often mistaken for Christmas by too many people.

In the darkest days of our year, the human world in its perpetual orbit comes each season within the light of a steady star. This light is not a flashing brilliance. It is a slowly growing radiance that surprises us in odd places. Indeed, we are first reminded of it by one of earth's most universal yet weakest things, the first tentative, tiny cry of a new-born child. And the light itself is seen first as the little luminance over a cradle, luminance that comes straight from a mother's heart.

Presently the luminance becomes a radiance that enfolds a family, enlightens a home, *all homes, and all the world.* "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." The birth of life new, unsoiled, and unspoiled, strengthens our hope and renews our faith that out of our strivings are coming better days and nobler years of human life.

The cry of the new-born child, the love of the new-made mother flung into the darkest night come flooding back in radiance and the mighty harmony of an angel chorus, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, Peace, Good Will to men."

"As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be"! This is Christmas! This is Christmas shining brightly with the steady radiance of high hope, noble aspiration, and sacrificial love.

The day called Christmas comes and goes. The reality that is Christmas lives on and enlightens human minds and hearts. In this reality our hopes abide. For in this reality abides "peace and good will" for all men.

"Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing which the Lord hath made known unto us."

SOME DO IT WITH A CHRISTMAS OFFERING

"AND just what does that head mean?" queried an observer peeking over the shoulder of the editor. Well, it has reference to our (each and all of us for sure) Fair Share contribution to the Unified Appeal of The Universalist Church of America. If you want it head on, we are saying that some Universalist parishes raise their Fair Share in part, at least, through a Christmas offering. This is fine and we pass the method along for serious consideration to churches that feel they have not yet discovered the best way to support their national organization.

The particular method of raising the Fair Share contribution to the Unified Appeal is the business of each church. The giving itself is the business of every last one of us. This leads us to a happy Christmas thought. There are no limits to this contribution business as far as gifts to your church are concerned. Whatever the method of your particular church, you can *add to* your church's over-all resources by making a little secret, extra personal Christmas gift to the Unified Appeal. Your gift, added to those of other generous Universalist Santa Clauses, could be just the thing that would keep an otherwise doomed Service Committee project going. It might be just the thing that would add to the process of Universalist extension another Universalist Fellowship. It might be . . . oh well, what's the use of going on like this? There are almost infinite possibilities of giving to your church, *and they are all good.*

Whether your church or mine does it or not, we can each be one of the some who do it with a Christmas offering.

AN EVERY PARISH JOB

THE study of the Joint Merger Committee manual recently released and *now available to every Universalist parish,* is an every parish job. As Dr. Rice says in his contribution in this number, the decision on merger or other forms of possible relationship between Universalists and Unitarians is and will be that of Universalists and Unitarians in local churches. If but a small number of us study the situation and but a small number of us make a decision,

no matter what that decision, it will be neither sound nor useful for future years.

This is an every parish job. Yea, but more even, it is an every Universalist job for Universalists. The decision *is* yours.

DEATH FOR CHRISTMAS

A YOUNG girl of whom we know is going to have a very sad Christmas this year as will also her mother. The husband and father of these two was killed on a highway north of Boston recently. The death of this man, who was a decent American citizen, was caused by the driver of one of the better-known brands of high-speed sports cars. The incredibly irresponsible driving that caused an innocent man's death was totally inexcusable. When the police catch up with that driver, as no doubt they will have when this is in print, we earnestly hope that full and stern justice will be done.

Complete and just punishment for this ghastly crime will not, of course, bring back the slain father and husband. It may, however, help to restrain other irresponsible fools and knaves who are making slaughter pens of our public highways.

The perpetrator of the crime we are commenting on gave death for Christmas to an unsuspecting family. Numerous others like him have done so before and will do so in the future. Whether these unnecessary killings are due to alcohol, depraved brutality, or stupidity, the American people must put a stop to such murderous outrages right soon.

UNENFORCEABLE LAWS

AMERICANS are said to be lawless people. Certainly our record with respect to the use and misuse of the automobile places us a long way down the line of the law and order scoreboard.

We were meditating on the problem of law enforcement and responsible citizen behavior the other day when we suddenly noticed our immediate surroundings. We were walking up a street which we frequent and just then passing a law school located in that block. On that same block were frequent metal signs on both sides of the street admonishing the citizenry, "No parking at any time." And on both sides of the street, filling the block to capacity, were parked automobiles. We do not know for sure, but from our observations, it seems that many of those cars might be the property of law students and law professors.

What shall we say of this spectacle? First, of course, it should be said that there is not room in all the garages of our city for all of the cars that come in and need to come to town and be parked for periods of time. What was bad behavior some years ago in the matter under discussion is now recognizably necessary. The city government and its police department so recognize it by permitting its continuance. We are forced to observe, however, that the process of repealing laws by mass violation must have the effect of stimulating disrespect for law, particularly among the younger generation. We believe those signs should have come down some years ago and that laws that they were intended to help enforce should have been publicly wiped off the books.

The maintenance of unenforceable laws and the public pretense of enforcing such laws does a great injustice to our governing bodies, our police and our citizenry.

HOLD THESE DATES FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Dr. Fenwick L. Leavitt, Jr., chairman of the Arrangements Committee, has announced the time and place of the next Universalist General Assembly. This will be in Syracuse, N.Y., opening Tuesday, October 27, and closing November 1, 1959.

The Universalist sessions will be highlighted first by the Occasional Sermon, Tuesday, October 27, which will be preached by the Rev. Clifford Stetson of Vermont.

All day Thursday, October 29, will be given over to reports from the Merger Committee, discussion of those reports and an advisory report on merger.

At the Sunday morning service of worship, Dr. Max A. Kapp, assistant dean of the Theological School, St. Lawrence University, will preach the sermon. The service will be held in the Syracuse University Chapel and music will be provided by the University Choir.

Write these dates in your engagement book now. Your General Assembly will be held in Syracuse, October 27 through November 1, 1959. Watch these columns for further information.

Reactions Of Our Readers

WORLD NEEDS BOTH UNITARIANISM AND UNIVERSALISM

To the Editor:

The Universalist Leader of October 1958 contains *The Uniqueness of Universalism* by the Rev. Albert Q. Perry and an editorial, *We Are Not Committed to Merger,* I presume by Dr. Lalone.

I heartily endorse the general theme of the splendidly written article by Mr. Perry and I fully agree with the statement that we are *not* committed to merger.

Time is running out before we vote. I am only one person but if the *Leader* can find space, I would address myself to the Universalist constituency.

I would honestly like to know whether *any* Unitarians and Universalists are unreservedly for merger. It is my belief that the major motivations have been and are convenience, expediency and more economic efficiency.

I admire greatly the history and contribution of the Unitarian movement. I greatly respect many Unitarian ministers and laymen. I must frankly admit that I have believed and do believe that Unitarians and Universalists as persons, churches, and denominations are poles apart. It may be regrettable, but I think throughout the merger talks, we have moved steadily farther apart.

Today the Unitarian and Universalist Churches are finding new life. There have been more good Universalist writers on Universalism in the past few years than have been in evidence in the past decades.

There is a tremendous work for Unitarians to do as Unitarians and for Universalists to do as Universalists. Let us avoid the error of lessening the effect of both of these churches. Merger may hurt the cause of liberal religion more than we can possibly foresee.

Forgive me for personalizing the matter. I have talked with numerous Unitarian and Universalist leaders and laymen and I have not found one who did not have a great many misgivings on this subject. I have felt that some persons were for it because they were afraid of being impolite or afraid they would be looked upon as outcasts. This is a time when we should *not be afraid* of anything. Let us not care what anyone says about us if we know in our own hearts we are selflessly thinking only of the good and future of both denominations.

These historic churches can be friendly, co-operative and mutually grateful for each other. They can also see that Unitarians are Unitarians and Universalists are Universalists and neither one is poorer for that fact, but infinitely richer.

As we face together a period of growth and revitalization, let us not do anything that would hinder a splendid and growing future for us both. The world needs a strong Unitarian emphasis and a strong Universalist emphasis.

— Seth R. Brooks
Washington, D. C.

GLAD BALLOU TREATISE TO BE REPRINTED

To the Editor:

Congratulations on plans to republish *Treatise on Atonement.* I have several parishioners waiting for it, and hope that publication will be rushed — and that price will be reasonable. If reasonable enough, shall probably make this one of my Christmas gifts to ministers who know nothing about us.

— Knut Halle
Pleasant Plains, S. I., N. Y.

PRAISE FOR PERRY ARTICLE

To the Editor:

The Uniqueness of Universalism by Albert Q. Perry, is one of the very best articles ever written on this subject. It illustrates so well what I, among many others, have been saying for years. Alas, we who believe as Mr. Perry does, are "crying in the wilderness." I honestly believe that the following statement of Brother Perry is only too correct: "This date (when we started to have high-falutin' trained clergy, as my Southern friends call it) coincides with the beginning of an era when Universalism found it increasingly difficult to interest people in the movement." Much of Mr. Perry's article is so good, it ought to be reprinted in pamphlet form, or mimeographed. We can all learn a lot from it!

— Knut Halle
Pleasant Plains, N. Y.

THOUGHTFUL APPRECIATION

To the Editor:

I have particularly enjoyed recent numbers of the *Leader*: the visit to Albert Schweitzer College in Graubünden Chur Walden (this must be very near, if not actually in, Rhaeto-Romance-speaking territory, and so an interesting place for students of Romance languages); the major addresses at Chicago in August; calm consideration of the proposed merger with the Unitarians. Personally, with all good will to our Unitarian friends, I hope we can keep our own old flag flying a while longer.

— J. A. Kearns
Staten Island, N. Y.

GRANDSON OF SYLVANUS COBB

To the Editor:

In connection with the tribute to Sylvanus Cobb in *The Leader* for May it may be of interest to note the death of Frederick W. Cobb at Los Gatos, California, on May 18th, at the age of 87. Mr. Cobb was a grandson of Sylvanus Cobb. He has often recounted to me his memories of his grandfather.

— Elmo A. Robinson
San Jose, California

Association Of Universalist Women

16 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts

DO YOU KNOW?

Apropos of the proposed merger of The Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association, a clearer understanding of auxiliary organizations of both parent bodies, including those which are now legally autonomous, would seem essential.

For purposes of discussion, we have taken some questions most frequently asked about the Association of Universalist Women and have tried to answer them as briefly as possible.

Beginning with the January *Leader,* we shall have a series of articles on the several State A.U.W.s, a vital link in the over-all program for Universalist women. In the fall of 1959, before the Biennial, we shall have a restatement of The Association of Universalist Women's purpose, procedures and programs.

What is The Association of Universalist Women?

This is the name given to the legal corporation through which Universalist women are engaged in a program which best fulfills the principles of their liberal faith. It is a non-delegate body, any Universalist woman who is interested in the program being eligible to vote at business meetings.

When was the A.U.W. formed?

In *1869,* Universalist women united to form the first national organization of church women, the Women's Centenary Association which had for its purpose the raising of funds for the Universalist Church.

In *1873,* the group was incorporated under the provisions of a charter issued by a Special Act of Congress, District of Columbia.

In *1905,* the name was changed to the Women's National Missionary Association.

In *1939,* the name was changed to The Association of Universalist Women, this name being more descriptive of the program initiated at this time.

Who are the members of the A.U.W.?

Active Members: There are no membership requirements such as dues. All women who are in sympathy with the objectives of the Association and who participate in its program are eligible for membership through the local groups and, in turn, the State organizations.

Members-at-large: Universalist women living in unorganized states or districts.

Life-Members: Individuals who at one time have made a payment of $25. These are sometimes known as memorial memberships, many of them being given in recognition of an individual by a group.

Patron Member: Any persons giving a gift of $100 or more at one time.

What is the purpose of the A.U.W.?

As stated in the Bylaws, it is to bring together into one group, the woman-power of the Universalist Church for the promotion of its total program.

The objectives of the organization are:

Every Universalist woman a thinking, active member of her church

Every Universalist woman contributing some service to her church

A planned program of women's activities in every church

A unified organization for all Universalist women in each church

How does the A.U.W. function?

Action taken by the members at biennial meetings.

Decisions of the Executive Board between biennials.

Departments and Committees.

Who composes the Executive Board?

The President, two Vice-Presidents, Recording Secretary, Treasurer and four Trustees.

How are these persons chosen?

They are elected by Universalist women voting at the biennial sessions who choose from a slate of officers presented by a Nominating Committee, the chairman of which is included in the slate of candidates to be selected.

Is there regional representation on the Executive Board?

No, although the nominating committee endeavors to have representation from different regions on the slate of candidates. Each State Association has its own governing body which carries out the national program in its area. The State Presidents' Council meets annually with the Executive Board to help determine policy and plan program.

How is the A.U.W. financed?

The A.U.W. receives its income from the voluntary contributions of State Associations which in turn receive their funds from the local groups.

Income on invested funds of the Association.

Members-at-large, life and patron members, unsolicited gifts.

What is the relationship of the A.U.W. to the Unified Appeal of The Universalist Church of America?

The A.U.W. receives no funds from The Universalist Church of America. The Association is a *contributor* to the Unified Appeal, giving $6,000 annually for projects which it sponsors jointly with the Universalist Service Committee: Japan ($3,000) and Jordan House, Suffolk, Va. ($3,000). Gifts over and above this amount are given to The Universalist Church for other purposes when the occasion demands.

What permanent funds does the A.U.W. hold?

The major funds of the A.U.W. are the Jubilee Fund, the Blackmer

Fund, the Clara Barton Birthplace and Camp Fund, the Church Building and Loan Fund and General Endowment Fund.

Can any group of women in a Universalist Church become affiliated with the A.U.W.?

Any group can become affiliated by expressing the desire to participate in the program and by contributing to its efforts either with gifts of money or service.

In states where there is an organization, the rules governing the State A.U.W. will determine procedures.

Each member group is independent in its local work.

What should women in a local church do if they want to form an A.U.W.?

One of the women should write to the A.U.W. office which will refer the matter to the proper state organization as well as giving direct help. The State A.U.W. will arrange for some person to visit the group, and send literature.

From whom does a local group receive help in its program?

State and national Executive Boards, active members of the A.U.W. and the professional staff. In addition to help provided by the A.U.W., denominational departments provide excellent materials.

How?

Through correspondence and in person. Opportunities to meet with other Universalist women and groups are provided through area meetings, summer institutes and denominational conferences.

How does the A.U.W. help the local women's group?

Through *Administration* which coordinates all departments. Help is given in establishing organizational structure, procedures and policies.

Through *Program* which may be defined as the total of all activities of the A.U.W. The program of the A.U.W. is in four fields of churchmanship — worship, education, fellowship and service.

What are the three major departments of the A.U.W.?

Education which is responsible for programs, education materials, and summer conferences.

Service which is responsible for the direction of the national projects such as Japan, Jordan House and others.

Finance which determines the financial policies of the organization.

An important standing committee is the one which has the direction of the Clara Barton Birthplace and Camps.

What are the major publications of the A.U.W.?

The *Bulletin,* a bimonthly publication of eight pages, is mailed directly to every Universalist woman who wishes to receive it. There is no subscription charge.

The *Yearbook,* an annual publication of some seventy pages, covers all phases of the Association program — organization, education programs, service and worship. A copy of the *Yearbook* is sent to each state and local president and additional copies are sold at a nominal price.

Annual Service of Dedication, written by a Universalist laywoman, is one of the traditional services in which all women are asked to share.

Other publications of the A.U.W. include service project leaflets, educational material such as *CUES,* mimeographed programs and program packets.

Is there any paid staff at the A.U.W. office?

Yes. The staff includes the executive director, assistant to the director, financial secretary and office secretary.

Where can one find out more about the A.U.W.?

Write to the headquarters office at 16 Beacon Street, Boston 8, Massachusetts.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Mrs. Frank Westerberg, formerly of West Hartford, Conn., is the new hostess at the Clara Barton Birthplace. Mr. and Mrs. Westerberg have been active members of the Universalist church for many years and Mrs. Westerberg's experience in gift shop management augurs well for the one at the Birthplace.

Bernice Cunningham, chairman of the Wider Fellowship of Universalist Women, reports that we now have one hundred and forty women in this group, many of whom contribute to the regular projects of the Association.

Mrs. Harvey Mitchell, president of the North Carolina Association, was elected head of the State Presidents' Council at their meeting in Framingham in September. Mrs. Mitchell is a member of the Kinston, N. C. Universalist Church.

The October number of *Nursing World* includes an interesting article on the Clara Barton Birthplace and Elliott P. Joslin Camps. Mrs. Marguerite Martin, the author, who spent some time at the camps collecting her information, generously gave the check she received in payment for her article to the camp funds.

One of the prized possessions of the Association of Universalist Women is the letter which Clara Barton wrote to Mrs. Norman S. Thrasher of Lakewood, Ohio, back in 1905. In this letter which now hangs in the Birthplace, Clara Barton tells Mrs. Thrasher that her belief that "I am a Universalist is as correct as . . . your being one yourself." Universalist women will be interested to know that Mrs. Thrasher, now an elderly woman, still lives in Lakewood and while there is no Universalist church in her town, she is a member of the larger Universalist Church and takes a keen interest in its program and that of the Association. A recent letter from Mrs. Thrasher expressed her pleasure at receiving one of the Birthplace booklets which includes a copy of Miss Barton's letter to her.

News of Churches and Church People

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR BETHANY UNION

One of the attractive rooms at Bethany Union.

Bethany Union, a non-profit organization, provides a real home for young business women and students at a reasonable rate. Bethany Union is one of our Universalist projects.

Donation Day for Bethany Union is December 19, 1958. Bethany Union can always use gifts for the Home. Household articles or gifts of money would be greatly appreciated.

NEW LIFE AT PROVINCETOWN

Right after Labor Day in 1957, the handful of Universalist folk at the Church of the Redeemer (Universalist) in Provincetown, really settled down for a ten-month period of hibernation until, with the coming of summer again, a minister would come for two months to preach the gospel of Universalism in the historic old church at the tip of Cape Cod. Hardly anyone could remember when the church had had more than a two-month summer minister and a long winter with a closed church. About this time, a suggestion was made that they undertake by themselves a course of reading, study, and discussion of Universalism throughout the winter, and they organized a discussion group with six persons participating who met every second Tuesday through the winter. As winter passed, the group grew in numbers and in enthusiasm, and came into the spring of 1958 with a new feeling of hopefulness for the church. Dr. Stanley Manning came to be their summer minister, and they extended their program to four months, where it had previously been only two. They inquired about help in establishing a church school, and made plans for continuing their educational study group during the summer and for the coming winter. In their enthusiasm, they attracted a number of new families to the church, and Dr. Manning received many of them into church membership. By mid-summer they were asking for help in revising their constitution, in establishing a financial drive, had formed a pulpit committee, and were looking for a full-time minister to serve their church. They have now called a minister, James Mott, who will be settled early in 1959.

Signs of life indeed! Phoenix out of the sand dunes!!

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS FOR WOONSOCKET CHURCH

The First Universalist Church of Woonsocket, R. I., has been the recipient of three more stained glass windows for its new sanctuary. One depicting Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane was presented by Theodore P. Cook and his sister, Gertrude N. Cook, in memory of their parents and Mr. and Mrs. E. Charles Francis, who were liberal benefactors of the church. This window was dedicated on Sunday, September 14. A second children's window was given by Mrs. LeRoy B. Smith in memory of her husband. This window was dedicated on September 28. A third youth window was given by Mr. and Mrs. Frank G. Parue in memory of Mr. Parue's parents. This window was dedicated on October 26.

Thus far, six stained glass windows have been presented to the Woonsocket Church. Randolph C. Holt is chairman of the Memorial Gifts Committee through whom these gifts have been received. Looking ahead to its one hundred twenty-fifth anniversary in October 1959, this local church hopes to have its sanctuary completely furnished with stained glass windows.

DEVELOPMENTS IN CALIFORNIA AND KANSAS

The Rev. Fred LeShane is now settled in Ventura where he has organized a new Universalist Fellowship, picking up what was left of a defunct Unitarian Fellowship, in that city. The Rev. James W. McKnight left Hutchinson, Kansas after four years, during which time the Kansas Convention was revived and Kansas was admitted to the Midwest Universalist Conference. The regional minister, the Rev. John MacPhee, comes to Kansas twice a year now to guide the state work. The Rev. Ben Kjelshus has been at Junction City, Kansas for a year and the results are promising. The Hutchinson Church is in close touch with Wichita University and a qualified man from that campus preaches at

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Church School and Adult Group	10 a.m.
Worship	11 a.m.

SETH R. BROOKS, D.D., *Minister*

All S-2 buses run to the church

Hutchinson every Sunday, sixty miles away. Plans are being made for permanent leadership at Hutchinson

Mr. McKnight left Kansas in midsummer feeling that Kansas was in much better health than when he arrived during the hot, dry summer of 1954. He preached on the West Coast at the Los Angeles Church in August and at the September Sunday outside preaching day with the Bakersfield Unitarian Fellowship. During a conference with Mr. Fred LeShane in August at Santa Paula, California, meetings were held with the church at Santa Paula and with the members of the Ventura Fellowship. The Santa Paula group feels that it has a part in Universalist colonization. Both McKnight and LeShane are convinced that California is ready for real advance. Dr. Philip R. Giles, National Superintendent, will be in California during April. He will ordain Mr. Sawyer, the minister of the strong Van Nuys Universalist-Unitarian Church, and in all probability will install both Mr. McKnight and Mr. LeShane. California wants money, dedication, and men for immediate progress.

NEW YORK MINISTERS ELECT OFFICERS

At the Annual Convention meeting of the New York State Universalist Ministers' Association, the Rev. Robert Sterling of Little Falls, the Rev. Maurice Cobb of Dolgeville and Salisbury Center, and the Rev. James Hunt of Cortland were elected as President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer, respectively. The annual dues of the Association were raised to two dollars per year, and may be sent to Mr. Hunt at 19 Harmon Avenue, Cortland, N. Y.

WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF IT?

When you come to church service are you a critic, a spectator, or a participant? Upon this depends what you take away. The church service comes alive when we feel a "Presence that disturbs us with the joy of elevated thoughts".

—WALLACE G. FISKE

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VISITING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA?

Don't fail to attend beautiful Throop Memorial Universalist Church, 300 South Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena. Sunday mornings: Youth Fellowship at 10:30, Church School at 10:45; Worship at 11. Dr. Harmon M. Gehr, Minister.

"What is the defendant's reputation for veracity?" asked the judge.

"Your Honor," said the witness, "I have known him to admit that he had been fishing all day and hadn't gotten a single bite!"

— *The Watchman-Examiner*

WEEKS TO REMEMBER

The Ferry Beach Park Association offers these weeks for your 1959 vacation planning. Plan NOW to take part in one of these weeks of inspiration, education and fun at Ferry Beach, Saco, Maine.

JULY

4	FIRST FAMILY WEEK	11
11	Camp Seabreeze (Junior High)	25
25	Religious Education	AUG. 1

AUGUST

1	Ass'n of Universalist Women	8
8	Either week available to a non-profit group, not necessarily religious. More information from our President, Stanley Rowland, 115 Windermere Rd., Auburndale, Mass.	15
15		22
22	WORLD AFFAIRS & 2nd FAMILY WEEK	29
29	YOUTH LAB (High School)	SEPT. 5

Make these YOUR weeks to remember. Simply send a postal to Rev. Keith Munson, 21 Tinkham Rd., Springfield, Mass. You will receive the FERRY BEACHER, come spring.

FLORIDA MINISTER CALLED TO NEW YORK UNIVERSALIST PULPIT

The Rev. Leonard Helie of Homestead, Florida, has been appointed interim minister of the Universalist Church of New York City, it was announced today by Stanley Moore, chairman of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Helie, who has served both Unitarian and Universalist churches in Newport, R. I., Roxbury, Mass., and Sanford, Maine, has taken up his new duties and will preach this coming Sunday on *The Meaning of Worship*.

Mr. Helie, a poet and essayist of distinction, was graduated from Colby College, did graduate work at Yale University, and earned his divinity degree from Harvard Divinity School. He is married and the father of two children.

INSTALLATION

EARLE T. McKINNEY was installed as nineteenth minister of the First Universalist Church, Portland, Maine, at an evening service, Sunday, October 19, at which a large attendance was present.

Those chosen by the minister to participate were: the Rev. D. Stanley Rawson, minister of Messiah-All Souls, the sister Universalist Church of Portland, who gave the Invocation; the Rev. Wilburn B. Miller, D.D., minister of the First Parish (Unitarian) Church of Portland, who gave the Readings.

The Rev. Philip Randall Giles, D.D., General Superintendent, preached the Sermon. Neal Allen, moderator of the Church, led the Congregation in the act of Installation. The Rev. Ida M. Folsom, minister of the First Universalist Church, Dover-Foxcroft, offered the Installation Prayer. Dr. Robert Cummins, former General Superintendent and interim minister of the Congress Square Church, gave the Charge to the minister and the Rev. Milton M. McGorrill, minister of the First Universalist Church of Bangor and superintendent of the Universalist Church of Maine, gave the message to the congregation.

The Rev. Edward F. Allen, minister of the Thornton Heights Methodist Church and president of the Council of Churches of Greater Portland, brought greetings from the religious community. Mr. McKinney offered a benedictory prayer in behalf of the church and those participating. A reception followed.

BOWEN FUND GRANTS FOR UNIVERSALIST SCHOOLS

Bowen grants of one hundred dollars each are available to twelve Universalist churches for educational use.

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A high school girl was telling her family about her home economics class.

"Do they let you eat what you cook?" her mother asked.

"Let us?" she answered. "They make us!"

— *The Watchman-Examiner*

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OBITUARY

GEORGE HOWARD GIBSON

George Howard Gibson, well-known Universalist layman, died October 3, 1958, in West Hudson Hospital, Kearney, N. J., after an illness of several months.

Mr. Gibson was born February 20, 1894. He was educated at Lake Forest College and the University of Chicago. For eighteen years, he was associated with the Macmillan Company as editor in the Trade Department. He was a member of the Church of the Redeemer (Universalist), East Orange, N. J., and past president of the Men's Club of East Orange. He was also a member of Quill Club of New York.

BANGOR CHURCH REMODELS VESTIBULE

Through the very great kindness and generosity of one of the members of the First Universalist Church of Bangor, Maine, a sum of twenty-five hundred dollars was given to renovate the vestibule, which badly needed the work done. A new vinyl tile floor was laid, including stairways and tower landings. The walls were painted and the woodwork revarnished. New and modern antique-gold decorative electric fixtures were installed. The appearance of the vestibule now is bright and cheery. Its very looks say, "Good morning" to the people as they enter the building. The renovation so affected the women's organizations that they provided money to clean and paint the two parlors of the church. These changes have not only been needed but they have been most enthusiastically received.

HUMANISTS PROPOSE PROGRAM FOR DEFENSE OF SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

A 12-point program to preserve the separation of church and state in public schools has just been outlined by the American Humanist Association.

The statement suggests that chapter and individual members of the American Humanist Association: 1. support the expansion of the public school system; 2. fight segregation in schools; 3. support the school lunch program even where sectarian schools are being served by it, on the premise that the child's health is served; 4. oppose religious instruction in public school buildings; 5. oppose the use of public funds for the purchase of books for sectarian schools; 6. examine so-called "moral or spiritual guidance" courses given in public schools to see they do not aim to bolster any one orthodox religious institution; 7. resist the use of public funds for bus transportation of sectarian schools; 8. challenge all religious ceremonies in public schools whenever possible; 9. oppose release time classes for religious instruction in public schools; 10. defend the legal right of religious denominations to establish school systems of their own; 11. support the right of public school children to stay away from baccalaureate addresses without penalty; 12. oppose the wearing of any religious garb by public school teachers.

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A dean of women at a coeducational college recently began an important announcement to the student body as follows:

"The president of the college and I have decided to stop necking on the campus."

— *The Watchman-Examiner*

UNIVERSALIST FALL MEETINGS

Vermont Sessions

Forty-six delegates, representing eighteen churches, met at the Universalist Church in Woodstock, Saturday, October 11, for the 125th annual sessions of the Vermont-Quebec Universalist-Unitarian Convention. Friends and non-delegate Universalists doubled the attendance. The state and provincial associations of Universalist women held their annual meeting on the same date.

Following registration, the opening devotional service was led by the Rev. Clifford W. Stetson of Springfield. The business session was presided over by the convention president, the Rev. Robert S. Miller, Burlington.

The meetings of the women's and the men's organizations were held concurrently following the business meeting. Mrs. Howard Spoerl spoke to the women on *The Family as a Total Unit.* The Rev. Mounir R. Sa'adah of Woodstock addressed the men on *Opportunities the Near East Situation Offers.*

Following the convention dinner, served in the Parish House, the Rev. Philip R. Giles, D.D., General Superintendent, Universalist Church of America, was the occasional speaker.

New York State Convention

The 133rd annual sessions of the N. Y. State Convention of Universalists were held in the Pullman Memorial Universalist Church, Albion, October 10-13.

The convention theme, *Today's Challenge to the Universalist Conscience,* was elaborated and illustrated with a full program of both addresses and discussions. The editor of the *Leader* arrived Friday evening just too late to hear the opening theme address by Dr. Robert Cummins, but found the delegates inspired by this well-known Universalist leader's vigorous challenge.

Saturday was a full day beginning with business sessions presided over by the president, Dr. Donald Hoyt. The day was taken up with sessions on Social Action, the Association of Universalist Women, the Universalist Ministers' Association. Dr. Robert Tapp, St. Lawrence Theological School, recently returned from a sabbatical year in Europe, spoke to the ministers on *European Religious Liberalism.*

Following these separate sessions, the business meeting was resumed until dinner. The convention banquet followed with speaker, Prof. George B. Cressey of Syracuse University. The rugged New York Universalists continued their program after the banquet with a Church Extension round table led by Myles Blanchard.

The Sunday morning convention service was led by the local minister, Dr. Joseph Sullivan. The Rev. Richard Woodman of Binghamton preached the Occasional Sermon which was a vigorous demand that Universalism, true to its greatest tradition, attack the hells of this world which wreck the lives and threaten the future of their fellowmen.

Again under the genial, but persistent discipline of Dr. Hoyt, Universalists carried on their business session Sunday afternoon. The Sunday evening program began with a religious education buffet supper served at the Presbyterian Church. The hosts were most hospitable, the dinner was delightful. The noise from the kitchen following dinner was almost unbearable. In spite of this, Alice M. Harrison gave a brilliant account of Universalist and Unitarian work with and for our growing junior high population. While listening to Miss Harrison, this editor-reporter was moved to write an open letter to church architects and make a strong plea for something more than a three-eighths plywood panel which divides the kitchen and dining room of so many, many church and educational institutions.

Dr. Philip R. Giles led a session on our Four-Year Advance Program speaking on the topic, *Religious Obligations of the Universalists,* at eight o'clock. At eight-thirty, Mrs. Ruth MacLean led a session on *Professional Leadership.* This most interesting period was high-lighted by a dramatic recording of a little play presenting an interview between Dr. Ebenezer Fisher, first president of the St. Lawrence Theological School and Olympia Brown, later the first ordained Protestant woman minister in the United States. Following this, Dean MacLean and a student did a present day interview of the Dean with a prospective student, Patricia Bateman.

Dr. Donald B. F. Hoyt completed his statutory years as president of the Convention and so was not a candidate for re-election. To succeed him in the office of president, Edmund W. Pease was elected. The Rev. Howard B. Gilman, state superintendent, was re-elected as secretary, and Donald W. Beebe, treasurer.

Massachusetts Universalist Rally

Nearly two hundred people from Massachusetts parishes met at the historic Independent Christian Church in Gloucester, mother church of American Universalists, Sunday afternoon, October 19. Provision had been made according to reservations to serve one hundred and forty people at the rally supper, but a large overflow had to be fed in local restaurants.

Following the registration at 2:30, the delegates made a brief pilgrimage to near-by Sargent Murray Gilman House, one-time home of John Murray. After convening in the sanctuary, they heard Professor Alfred S. Cole speak on *The First Hundred Years.*

After Professor Cole's address, the delegates broke up and formed small discussion groups to think about various aspects of the second hundred years of Massachusetts Universalism. These discussions ran the gamut from *Children's Education* through *Adult Education, Statements of Faith, Extension, Relating Religion to Society, Developing Leadership, Patterns of Worship,* and *Merger Possibilities.*

After the supper hour, the Rev. Walter Royal Jones, host minister, summarized the findings of the discussion groups' thinking on the next hundred years. Mr. Jones' report was a full-fledged tour-de-force and one of the most brilliant performances of its kind this reporter has been privileged to hear.

The one hundredth anniversary year rally of Massachusetts Universalists closed on the high note of worship in a brief service, led by the Rev. Frederick Libby Harrison, state superintendent.

Connecticut Conference

The autumn conference of Connecticut Universalists was held in Danbury, Saturday, October 25. The host minister, the Rev. Gaston Carrier, led the opening worship service after registration and luncheon. Benjamin I. Tennyson, president of the State Universalist Convention, brought greetings and Joseph Ferris, chairman of the local church board, welcomed the delegates.

Nathaniel Gifford of Danbury, a faculty member of Kent School, addressed the conference on *Liberal Religion in Western Europe Today* at the opening of the afternoon session. Following the address, members of the conference took part in the following workshop groups: *Youth Fellowship,* led by the Rev. Peter Lee Scott and Alexander Meek; *Balancing Your Church Budget* led by Le Roi Dixon; *Social Action in Connecticut,* the Rev. Albert Ciarcia; *Extending Your Church Fellowship,* the Rev. Robert Wolley; *Religious Education,* Mary Mauzey.

The Rev. Dana E. Klotzle, in the closing session of the afternoon meetings, spoke on *The Relationship of Universalist Advance to the Merger Plan.* A discussion period followed the address.

The closing address was given by Rabbi Jerome R. Molino of Danbury.

All parishes of Connecticut, except New London, were represented.

Pennsylvania Universalists Stress Freedom of Pew and Pulpit

Freedom of Belief and Action was the theme of the 127th session of the Pennsylvania Universalist Convention held in the Universalist churches of Towanda and Standing Stone, October 10, 11 and 12, 1958. Nearly all of the Universalist churches of Pennsylvania were represented in the three-day meetings. The pastor of the host churches is the Rev. Harry K. Means.

Following registration and assignment to lodging places Friday evening, a film furnished by the Greyhound company was shown to the delegates and visitors. Carl Foden of the Towanda church presided at a social hour in the parish rooms.

The devotion service Saturday morning was conducted by the Rev. Orren B. Alvord of Reading. Clifford Jones, of Athens, presided at the business session which followed. Officers and committees gave their reports for the year.

The convention adopted several resolutions.

One of the resolutions adopted by the convention was concerned with the fact that the attorney general of California has ruled that God cannot be mentioned in the classroom. Consistent with this ruling, one of the schools in California has instructed its librarian to examine all books in the school library and remove from circulation those books that mention God. The Ten Commandments have been banned in New Jersey and they have also been condemned as undesirable instructional material in New Hyde Park, L. I., New York. In New Jersey, a superintendent has sent out a directive that no more Christian hymns are to be used in the public schools of the state at Christmas. N. J. has passed a law which will render all Christmas observances as illegal by 1958. The resolution adopted was that this situation in various sections of the United States needs critical study and a watchful attitude should be kept toward further developments and any developments on this subject should be recorded in *The Universalist Leader.*

Another resolution adopted was an endorsement of the 16th Congress of the International Association for Religious Freedom, held in Chicago in August, and that Universalists be encouraged to give this Congress continued study and interreligious cooperation and that they keep themselves informed through *The Universalist Leader.*

The members of the resolutions committee were Mrs. Genevieve W. Gore, Mrs. Gertrude Champlin and Herbert Campbell.

Meetings of the Association of Universalist Women, Association of Universalist Men and the State Board of Directors were held Saturday afternoon.

The speaker Saturday afternoon was Attorney John Strahan, a member of the Glen Ridge Church, who spoke on *Freedom of the Pew.* Mr. Strahan made the following comment: "Among our brothers of more orthodox belief we find still very little that can be called freedom of the pew. They are still required to accept dogma and repeat creeds which to us may sound archaic and as a consequence many of our younger generation stand aside from the church."

Mr. Strahan concluded: "The tenets of a free religion require the clergy to lead and to teach and expect the laity to follow, but not as unquestioning and gullible children. An informed and articulate laity can strengthen the hand of the clergy and can lead to a religion based on reason and leading to an abiding faith in the right and its ultimate attainment."

Late Saturday afternoon the delegates were guided to the beautiful Universalist Church at Sheshequin, which is one of the beautiful shrines of the Universalist Church. Friday was designated as *Sheshequin Church Day,* but plans were changed because of the death of a prominent member of the church, Oscar J. Stevens.

The speaker Saturday evening at 6:30 in a restaurant near Towanda was District Attorney Wayne C. Smith, who gave a stirring address on *Freedom of Political Action.*

The worship service on Sunday, October 12, 11 a.m., was held in the Universalist Church at Standing Stone, which this year is celebrating its 100th anniversary. Three state ministers assisting in the service were Harry K. Means, host pastor; Orren B. Alvord and Henry W. Felton. The sermon, *The Freedom of the Pulpit,* was preached by the Rev. Peter Lee Scott, minister, First Church of New Haven, Connecticut.

The following officers were elected for the next year: President, Clifford Jones, Athens; Vice President, Cecil F. Reeser, Scranton; Secretary, Harry K. Means, Towanda; Treasurer, Nicholas H. Greene, Philadelphia. Trustees elected: Herbert Campbell, Athens; Charles Mann, Girard; William Earle, Philadelphia; Thomas Collins, Linesville, and Paul Huber, Reading.

The following were elected members of the Fellowship Committee: Henry W. Felton, Montrose; Andrew J. Weakley, Philadelphia; Orren B. Alvord, Lansdale; Cecil F. Reeser, Scranton, and Harry K. Means, Towanda.

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FLASH!!
TRUSTEES URGE WIDESPREAD DISCUSSION OF MERGER

The following statement was adopted by the Board of Trustees of The Universalist Church of America at a meeting held in Framingham, Massachusetts on November 19, 1958:

Now that Universalists and Unitarians are in the discussion stage of Merger consideration, and believing that only a creative exchange of thought and opinion among our people can result in the achievement of the true will of our Church, the Board of Trustees of The Universalist Church of America urges the fullest kind of study of the Merger Commission's Report.

In view of the above, the individual members of the Board and staff are encouraged to enter into such discussions freely — but individual opinions are by no means to be interpreted as the official position of the Board or denomination.

NOTICES

CENTRAL FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

October 22, 1958: Voted to accept the transfer of the Rev. Robert S. Wolley from Massachusetts jurisdiction during the period of his service in general denominational activities.

October 22, 1958: Voted to accept the transfer of the Rev. Fred A. Russell, Jr., from Massachusetts jurisdiction during the period of his service as a chaplain in the Army Air Force.

— ESTHER A. RICHARDSON, *General Secretary*

MASSACHUSETTS FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Offered Robert S. Wolley in transfer to the Central Fellowship Committee.

Offered Fred A. Russell, Jr., in transfer to the Central Fellowship Committee.

Terminated the Letter of License, of Bruno J. Visco as of October 15, 1958 upon being notified of his ordination as a Unitarian minister on October 5, 1958.

Offered John E. Wood in transfer to the jurisdiction of the New York Convention.

Offered James W. Hunt in transfer to the jurisdiction of the New York Convention.

Offered Raymond M. Scott in transfer to the jurisdiction of the New York Convention effective December 1, 1958.

— KENNETH C. HAWKES, *Secretary*
October 17, 1958

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MIDWEST FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Rev. Kenneth K. Marshall, a clergyman formerly of the Baptist Church, and now a member of the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis, will be examined for a clerical license under authority of this Committee, Wednesday, December 10, 1958, at Minneapolis, Minnesota. Dr. Carl H. Olson has been appointed Examiner by this Committee.

— STANLEY MANNING, *Secretary*

UNIVERSALIST WOMAN'S ALLIANCE

The Universalist Woman's Alliance will meet at Bethany Union, 256 Newbury Street, Boston, Friday, December 19, 1958, at eleven o'clock. This meeting will be the Christmas Party and Donation Day.

Mrs. John Miller will speak on *Hear the Angels Sing.*

Luncheon, seventy-five cents.
For reservations, call Mrs. Dumas, CI 7-9078.

— MARION H. PIKE, *Secretary*